



Pianist Elise Sobol brings her message of music to an enthusiastic audience in Aruba *A Cas di Cultura concert opens a week of activities with the artist*

Concert Pianist and Special Education teacher Elise Sobel graced the stage of the Cas di Cultura with her very special presence this past Thursday evening. Ms. Sobol, visiting educator and musician was joined on the stage by noted local Soprano Catherine Provence-Hanrath and accompanied on the drums by Ronny Provence. The concert was arranged by the Fundacion Muchilla Creativo, under President Rose-Marie Provence, Head of the Music department of the I.P.A, Aruba's school for teachers in training, with the cooperation of UNOCA.

Ms. Sobol, aside from being an accomplished musician that has performed with the Melbourne Musicians Chamber Orchestra, and others around the world, is also the New York State School Music Association Chairperson for Music for Special Learners. She teaches at the Jerusalem Avenue School in North Bellmore, Long Island and is on the Adjunct Faculty of the Music Education Department of NYU and C.W. Post College, and was named an Outstanding Woman of the 20th Century by the American Biographical Institute.

Aside from Elise Sobol's impressive credentials, it was the pure joy she feels in sharing her music, which clearly radiates from the stage, that so captured her audience. The evening's program, titled "Timeless Classics on Aruba" was a varied mix of Bach, Mozart, Mendelssohn and Ravel, with some Gershwin, Lerner and Lowe and a bit of Leonard Bernstein. She truly won the Aruban audience's hearts with beautiful renditions of "Mi n'Sa" by Padu del Caribe, and "Annette," by Rufo Weaver, the two composers of Aruba's National Anthem. Padu himself came on to the stage at the end to declare her performance "sensational" and Ms. Sobol gave an emotional bow to fervent applause for her beautiful and moving performance.

After the concert there was a meet and greet with the artists in the Cas di Cultura gardens with a wine and cheese party sponsored by Aruba Trading Company. Ms Sobol took some time to chat with her admirers, discuss teaching, particularly for children with special needs, and autographed copies of her book "An attitude and Approach for Teaching Music to Special Learners," and of her CD "From Elise-Melville to Melbourne." In an earlier interview, she had discussed her philosophy towards teaching and life in general with the words "Anything is possible!" the same words she pronounced to the audience from the stage at the end of the concert. Her own life, a story of trials and a struggle to survive from literally the day she was prematurely born at only two months old is an inspiration. Elise was hospitalized for an extended period with Influenza Meningitis at a very young age, then battled breast cancer at forty, and declares herself a fourteen-year cancer survivor. She asserts that music helped her survive and heal all these encounters, as "music is a sea that comes in and out, ...it's everything that is in tune and in tone, it is for life long living. It is also a language beyond words, and it reaches people who don't have language." Her upbeat attitude towards life despite her trials has infused her work, which has reached through the barriers of autistic children, where other techniques have not. "There is no greater lively art than music for bringing out the learning potential in a student. This multi-sensory approach to music education and performance incorporates visual, auditory, and tactile feedback which builds confidence and competence daily in the special learner."

During Ms. Sobol's two week stay in Aruba she will be conducting workshops over the next week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and will perform at the Manchebo Beach Hotel on Sunday Morning, August 28. The workshops will cover a diversity of subjects to assist all teachers, but particularly those working with Special Students. She believes that we all need to find what we do well, and use it to improve this world; to try to "pay it forward" for the gifts and talents we have been blessed with. She certainly blessed the audience with her talent on Thursday evening, and they were truly appreciative as she inscribed the copies of her books and CD's that were purchased as mementos of her performance with a very personal message for each individual.

We recommend you do not miss the opportunity to enjoy what will be a delightful performance on Sunday morning, and if any are interested in attending a workshop contact Rene Arends at telephone #567-4576 or Shamira Arends at # 567-1104.